

Virginia State Rehabilitation Council
Meeting Minutes
January 26, 2009

A meeting of the Virginia State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) was held on January 26, 2009 at the Virginia Department of Rehabilitative Services (DRS), Richmond, Virginia.

Members Present: Karen Baugh, Charles Benagh (by phone), Sandra Cook, Daniel DeBoer, Matthew Deans, Donna Kay Graff, Kenneth Holloway, Sarah Liddle, Kathleen Maybee, Marianne Moore, James Rothrock, Samuel Simon (by phone), Cherie Takemoto, Florence Watt

Members Absent: Robin Metcalf

Others Present: John Phelps, Field Rehabilitative Services Director; Elizabeth Smith, Policy and Planning Director; Mary Lutkenhaus, Policy Analyst; Vanessa Rakestraw, Policy Analyst; Rick Sizemore, Woodrow Wilson Rehabilitation Center (WWRC) Director; Barbara Tyson, Staff Support; Ernie Steidle, Chief Operating Officer; Joe Ashley, Director, Grants and Special Programs; Cat Clough & Bernadette Mayhall, Interpreters

Call to Order and Introductions of Members: Council Chairperson Cherie Takemoto called the meeting to order at 11:30 a.m. Ms. Takemoto announced that she had received written requests from Chuck Benagh and Sam Simon to participate by teleconference because of a medical condition/disability that prevented their attendance.

Approval of Minutes: A motion was made by Chuck Benagh, seconded, and passed by unanimous vote to approve the minutes of the November 18, 2008 meeting as distributed.

Matters of Public Comment: Joshua Wilson, a DRS client in the Richmond area whose case was closed in 2002, provided public comment that he is having trouble obtaining a computer for school. Ms. Takemoto thanked Mr. Wilson for providing public comment and referred him to John Phelps who will follow up.

Chairperson's Report

- The SRC March 16, 2009 meeting will be held at the Sheraton Waterside in Norfolk prior to the beginning of the Transition Conference.
- On behalf of the SRC, Ms. Takemoto provided public comment on the need to support the vocational rehabilitation program and other programs that serve individuals with disabilities at the budget hearings held in Northern Virginia. Danny DeBoer, joined by Kathy Maybee, Florence Watt, and Matthew Deans, provided comments at the budget public hearing held in Richmond.
- It is up to each Council member to provide their General Assembly members with a copy of the 2008 SRC Annual Report. Liz Smith will send the members a copy of Danny DeBoer's remarks before the budget committees to use as talking points in drafting a forwarding memo to their General Assembly members.

- Florence Watt attended the VaACCSES Annual Legislative Reception and met with some of the Legislative Aides. She felt it was a very productive and positive experience.
- On January 12, 2008, the SRC Chair, Vice-Chair, Past Chair and Committee Chairs met to review ways the SRC can work more effectively. The group is recommending the establishment of an Executive Committee, which will require a change to the SRC Bylaws.
- Florence Watt agreed to represent the SRC at the Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services Board meetings to be held April 7, June 2, September 15, and November 17.

Commissioner's Report

- The Commissioner shared with the Council his presentation before the Senate Finance Subcommittee on DRS' funding and the proposed budget reductions. The Council members received a listing of Senate and House proposed budget amendments for DRS programs.
- The Governor's Chief of Staff has directed agencies not to print annual reports, unless an exception is provided, as a money-saving measure. Therefore, the 2008 SRC Annual Report will be provided only in electronic format.
- The House version of the President's Economic Stimulus Package contains \$500 million for vocational rehabilitation and \$200 million for Centers for Independent Living. The results of the Economic Stimulus Package and the General Assembly budget amendments for vocational rehabilitation will determine DRS' ability to open any Order of Selection priority categories. Meanwhile, our counselors are being asked to encourage clients to put their names on the waiting list so they can be contacted when a category is opened. In addition, counselors are being reminded about their ability to provide "no cost" services to clients on the waiting list.

New Business & Working Lunch

Ticket to Work

Dr. Ashley introduced Sally Rhodes, an expert on the Social Security Administration's Ticket to Work program, who joined the Council by teleconference. Mr. Rhodes provided the members with an overview of the new Ticket to Work program, the Ticket to Work basics, Partnership Plus, and Ticket to Work resources of interest. For additional information, Ms. Rhodes referred Council members to the following websites: SSA's work site: www.socialsecurity.gov/work; CESSI's website: www.cessi.net/ttw/; and MAXIMUS website: www.yourtickettowork.com.

Dr. Ashley also introduced Jay Windsor as the DRS expert on Ticket to Work. You may contact Mr. Windsor by email at Jay.Windsor@drs.virginia.gov or by telephone at 1-800-552-5019.

Council Roundtable

Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC): Sarah Liddle reported that the SILC Executive Committee met on January 21 and the full Council met on January 22. It was

determined that the SILC would not send a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) letter to the Governor until they receive FOIA training at their next meeting. They are working on the next Statewide Independent Living State Plan which is due in 2010. There will be 16 public hearings held across the Commonwealth to help in the development of this Plan. Notices will be sent to SRC members.

Virginia Assistive Technology System (VATS) Advisory Council: Sam Simon reported that the last meeting was cancelled due to the Inauguration. New members have been appointed, a strategic plan is being developed, and the next meeting is scheduled to be held on March 10 in Richmond.

Parent Educational Advocacy Training Center (PEATC): Ms. Takemoto reported on the six new Webinars for transition services currently being aired. For additional information, go to www.peatc.org.

Department of Education (DOE): No report

Other Members - Matthew Deans reported on the Youth Leadership Forum sponsored by the Virginia Board for People with Disabilities.

Committee Reports

Internal Affairs Committee

Karen Baugh presented the draft changes to the SRC Bylaws as distributed prior to the meeting to create an Executive Committee under Article 5, Section 6: Committees. A vote on the change will be made at the March meeting. John Phelps previously distributed the Field Rehabilitation Services Division Performance Measure Report for the month ending December 2008. He noted the number served year to date are up from 1,340 to 1,388; 3,000 cases were opened prior to the closing of all categories; successfully closed as rehabilitated has a 26.3% change, and earnings has a 1.6% change. A review of the performance plan needs to be completed by April 15, 2009 in order to make comments by the next meeting.

External Affairs Committee

Danny DeBoer presented the names and credentials of the five employees recommended by the Committee for the 2009 Roy J. Ward Employee Leadership Recognition Award. A motion was made by Kathy Maybee, seconded, and passed unanimously for George Drummond, Nancy Worley-Martin, Bonnie Hawley, Amy Miller, and Sharon Russo to receive the 2009 awards. Ms. Takemoto will notify the recipients of their award, which will be presented at the May 11, 2009 meeting.

An agenda item will be added to the External Affairs Committee next month for Kathy Maybee to have a general discussion on reaching out to constituents.

A State Plan public hearing will be held on March 16 from 5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. during the Transition Conference in Norfolk. Liz Smith will advertise through the usual channels. Ms. Takemoto suggested that Mr. DeBoer review the *Guidelines for Public Comment* as shown on the Special Education Advisory Committee.

Old Business

Fiscal Report - Ernie Steidle provided an update on the previously distributed DRS budget as of December 2008.

Woodrow Wilson Rehabilitation Center (WWRC) Report – Rick Sizemore showed the YouTube presentation on the Wheelin' Sportsmen accessible deer hunt that was held in the wooded areas of the WWRC campus in January.

SRC Mission and Vision - Liz Smith will obtain the notes from Dr. Alan Lewis at VCU regarding the Mission Statement developed during the SRC retreat held in November. The External Affairs Committee will review the Vision & Mission statements and present to the full Council at the March meeting.

Old Business

Kathy Hayfield, with the Virginia Assistive Technology System, has been in contact with Karen Jackson, Vice President of Broadband Programs Center for Innovation Technology. This is in follow up to Ms. Jackson's presentation at the November SRC retreat.

Adjournment

The next regularly scheduled meeting will be held on March 16, 2009 in Norfolk at the Sheraton Norfolk Waterfront. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:00 p.m.